

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1-8. (Cancelled)

9. (New) A method for ascertaining a control voltage of a piezoelectric element, the method comprising:

measuring a voltage drop at the piezoelectric element following a charge process; and

inferring the control voltage of the piezoelectric element from the voltage drop.

10. (New) The method according to claim 9, further comprising:

measuring a first voltage applied at the piezoelectric element immediately following the charge process;

measuring a second voltage applied at the piezoelectric element immediately prior to a subsequent discharge process; and

subtracting the first and second applied voltages from each other to provide a difference, the individual control voltage of the piezoelectric element being inferred from the difference.

11. (New) The method according to claim 10, further comprising gathering the individual control voltage from a characteristic representing a relation between the difference and the individual control voltage.

12. (New) The method according to claim 11, further comprising ascertaining the characteristic experimentally on the basis of a large number of measurements at different actuators.

13. (New) The method according to claim 9, further comprising:

increasing the voltage applied at the piezoelectric element during the charge process iteratively until a voltage applied at the piezoelectric element

immediately following the charge process does not deviate from a voltage applied at the piezoelectric element immediately prior to a subsequent discharge process; and

rating the voltage as an individual voltage requirement, from which the individual control voltage of the piezoelectric element is inferred.

14. (New) The method according to claim 13, wherein the iterative increase of the voltage applied to the piezoelectric element and the measurement of the voltage able to be tapped off at the piezoelectric element are conducted at low pressures of a fluid to be injected.

15. (New) The method according to claim 13, further comprising continuously measuring a voltage characteristic at the piezoelectric element.

16. (New) The method according to claim 9, further comprising:

applying only one voltage to the piezoelectric element; and

increasing a charge time iteratively until a voltage applied at the piezoelectric element immediately following the charge process does not deviate from a voltage applied at the piezoelectric element immediately prior to a subsequent discharge process.